DR. S. VENUGOPALA CHARI : I introduce the Bill.

14.17 hrs.

STATEMENT RE. ELECTRICITY LAWS (AMENDMENT)ORDINANCE - *Laid*

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI) : I beg to lay on the Table an explanatory statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for immediate legislation by the Electricity Laws (Amendment) Ordinance, 1997.

[Placed in Library. *See* No. LT. 1571/97]

14.17½ hrs.

INCOME-TAX (AMENDMENT) BILL*

[English]

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Income-Tax Act. 1961.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : The question is :

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Income-Tax Act. 1961."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : I introduce** the Bill.

14.18 hrs.

STATEMENT RE: INCOME-TAX (SECOND AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE - *Laid*

[English]

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): I beg to lay on the Table an explanatory statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for immediate legislation by the Income-Tax (Second Amendment) Ordinance, 1996.

[Placed in Library. *See* No. LT. 1572/97]

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* Published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary Part-II, Section-2, dated 13.3.97.

** Introduced with the recommendation of the President.

14.18½ hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

[Translation]

(i) Need to restore access of inhabitants of Uttaranchal U.P. to the nearby forest for domestic use

SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT 'BACHDA' (Almora): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the villagers of Uttaranchal region of U.P. have got centuries old duly recognised rights to have access in the civil forests and reserved forests for collecting cattle fodder, fire-wood, timber for construction of houses agriculture implements and slate, sand and stone etc. The day-to-day life of the people of Uttaranchal cannot be imagined without these rights.

In compliance of Supreme Court orders, the Uttar Pradesh Government has imposed an undeclared ban on these right of villagers. As a result, thousands of forest labourers dependent on forest have been renderied jobless and a situation of starvation has arisen.

Besides their own subsistence, a serious problem of feeding their cattle has also arisen. This has led to severe resentment in the whole Uttaranchal region it may take a virlent turn.

Therefore, I request the Central Government to take appropriate statutory measures to restore these basic forest rights to the villagers of Uttaranchal.

(ii) Need for early Completion of work on bye-pass at Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh

SHRI MANOJ KUMAR SINHA (Ghazipur) : Mr Deputy-Speaker, Sir, Border Road Organisation is undertaking construction of a bye-pass on G.T. Road from Mohansarai to Mughalsarai a bridge on Ganga river in Varanasi (U.P). Initially, World Bank was funding this project and it was to be completed by 31-12-1991.

However, due to slow progress of work, the World Bank stopped funding this project from 1992. Now, Border Road Organisation has taken up this work. The Government has said that it would be completed in June, 1995 but not even half the work has been completed so far. As a result, the cost of the project has escalated many times and it would continue to rise further. Varanasi is religious and cultural City where lakhs of foreign tourists visit, but due to narrow roads, the traffic remains jammed two to four hours daily causing a lot of inconvenience to the people including foreign tourists. This also results in wastage of diesel and petrol worth crores of rupees. With construction of this bye-pass, not only several hours would be saved in covering the distance upto Calcutta but diesel and petrol worth crores of rupees would also be saved. This issue has been raised in this House several times but no action has comeforth so far.